in a browser accurately reflects what a viewer has done. It is also assumed that only one viewer uses a particular browser, again so that the cookie in the browser accurately reflects what the particular viewer has done. If different individuals use different sign-on names with the same browser, or if different individuals who use the same browser otherwise identify themselves to the system, they can be assigned separate I/codes even though they use the same browser.

It is also noted that a system could combine the operation of the present invention with the operation of the prior art type of system where access to advertising on particular web sites is sold for a specified amount. An operator of the system could sell "pre-buys", that is, access to the view-ops that occur on a particular site and the operator could insure that a particular advertiser always has access to these view-ops as done by the prior art systems. This could be done by merely entering into the system proposed bids with a value that is the maximum allowed by the system for those particular view-ops that are sold as pre-buys.

An alternative embodiment of the invention is shown in FIG. **7**. The system shown in FIG. **7** is designed to minimize latency due to Internet topographical distance between units.

The embodiment shown in FIG. **7** is a geographically distributed system which includes three systems **716A**, **716B** and **716C** each of which are identical to systems **16** shown in FIGS. **1** and **3**. Each of the systems **716A**, **716B**, and **716C** have associated bidding agents **730A**, **730B** and **730C**. Each of the systems **716A**, **716B** and **7126C** is located a different geographic area.

Client browser **711** sends web HTML references (such as those sent from browser **11** to web server **310**) to a commercial Internet service provider (an ISP) **712**. The ISP in turn sends an HTML reference to the system **716A**, **716B** or **716C** which is "topographically" closest to the browser **711**. For example, the three systems **716A**, **716B** and **716C** could be located on different continents, one in the U.S., one in Europe and one in Japan. With the system shown in FIG. **7**, HTML references from browsers in Europe would be directed to the system in Europe, HTML references from browsers in the U.S. would be directed to the system in the U.S. etc. The bid input unit **718** sends each proposed bid to bidding agents **730** associated with each system. Thus, the systems **716A**, **716B** and **716C** evaluate each proposed bid against the particular view-ops that are directed to each particular system. While for purposes of illustration, three systems **716A**, **716B** and **716C** are shown, any number of such systems could be connected in an overall network of systems.

While the invention has been shown and described with reference to preferred embodiments thereof, it should be understood that other embodiments are possible and that various changes in form and detail may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention. The scope of the invention is limited solely by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for supplying advertisements for display during a series of viewing opportunities (view-ops) which occur during the display of web pages on the Internet world wide web, each of said view-ops having specific characteristics,

a plurality of bidding agents,

a server for providing information concerning each view-op to said bidding agents,

a bid input system for providing proposed bids to said bidding agents, each proposed bid including, a reference to a specific advertisement, specifications of a desired view-op and a monetary amount which will be paid for displaying said specific advertisement in response to a view-op which meets said specifications of a desired view-op,

each of said bidding agent including logic for submitting a bid and a reference to a specific advertisement to said server if the information concerning a view-op satisfies the specifications of a desired view-op contained in a proposed bid, and

said server including bid selection logic for selecting the highest bid submitted by a bidding agent and for transferring the advertisement referenced in said highest bid to the web site presenting said view-op.

2. A server system for providing advertisements in response to HTML references from a web page, each HTML reference includes information identifying the source of said web page, said server system including,

a data base of advertisements,

a data base of viewer information including information concerning prior HTML references,

means for accepting proposed bids which specify a monetary amount for providing a particular advertisement in response to web page HTML references which satisfy specified criteria, said specified criteria including information included in said HTML reference and information from said data base of viewer information,

means for determining if a particular HTML reference satisfies said specified criteria,

means for selecting the highest bid which satisfies said specified criteria, and

means for responding to said HTML reference with the particular advertisement specified bit said selected bid.

3. A system for placing advertisements on web pages on the world wide web which are accessed by a viewer,

a first server which stores advertisements, said web pages having HTML references to said first server,

a data base of information on viewers,

bid input means for accepting bids to place advertisements on web pages which have particular characteristics and which are accessed by viewers having particular characteristics, and

bid selection means for selecting the highest bid for placement of an advertisement on a particular web page.

4. A system for displaying advertisements to viewers who access a web page comprising

a web server which stores a plurality of advertisements,

bid input means for providing to said system bids specifying characteristics of users and web sites where it is desired to display advertisements and a dollar bid for the right to display an advertisement on a site with the specified characteristics

a server system which includes means for evaluating bids, for selecting one of said advertisements in response to said bids and for designating to said web server which of said advertisements should be displayed,

whereby the particular advertisement that is displayed to a viewer is determined by a bidding process.

5. In an Internet which is operating according to the HTTP protocol, and which includes a browser for viewing web pages and for HTML referencing to remote servers,

a server which has stored therein a number of advertisements,

means for providing to said system bids for the opportunity to display advertisements on web pages which

have been accessed by a viewer having specified characteristics,

selection means for evaluating said bids and comparing them to the characteristics of a viewer that accesses a web page, said selection means including means for selecting the highest bid for a particular view-opportunity.

6. A method of placing advertisements on web pages on the world wide web which are accessed by a viewer utilizing a browser,

storing advertisements in a data base on a first server, said web pages having HTML references to said first server,

maintaining a data base of information on viewers,

accepting bids to place advertisements on web pages which have particular characteristics and which are accessed by viewers having particular characteristics,

selecting the highest bid for placement of an advertisement on a particular web page.

7. A system for placing advertisements on web pages on the world wide web, said web pages being accessed by viewers, each viewer utilizing a browser,

a first server which stores advertisements, said web pages having HTML references to said first server,

a data base of information on viewers and on the web sites that have been accessed by particular browsers,

bid input means for accepting bids to place advertisements on web pages which have particular characteristics and which are accessed by particular browsers which have been previously used to access web pages having particular characteristics,

bid selection means for selecting the highest bid for placement of an advertisement on a particular web page which has particular characteristics and which has been accessed by a browser which previously has accessed particular web sites.

8. The system recited in claim 7 where said world wide web is accessed by using HTTP protocol on the Internet.

9. A system for determining which advertisement to place on a web page that has been accessed by a viewer using a browser,

a first web server which has stored thereon advertisements, said web page having a HTML reference to said first web server,

a client server which provides means for entering bids to place particular advertisements on particular web pages which have particular characteristics and which are accessed by particular browsers which have previously accessed particular web pages,

a viewer data base_which has information concerning which web pages have been accessed by particular browsers,

a view server which evaluates the bids which have been entered and selects the highest bid for displaying an advertisement on a particular web page.

10. The system recited in claim 9 including a server which includes means for checking bids to determine if web page meets the specifications in a particular bid.

11. The system recited in claim 9 wherein a determination of which advertisement to place on a particular web page in done in machine real time and said bids are entered in human real time.

12. The system in claim 9 wherein said viewer data base includes information about viewers.

13. A method for placing advertisements on web pages on the world wide web, said web pages being accessed by viewers, each viewer utilizing a browser,

storing advertisements on a first server, said web pages having HTML references to said first server,

storing a data base of information on viewers and on the web sites that have been accessed by particular browsers,

providing bids to place advertisements on web pages which have particular characteristics and which are accessed by particular browsers which have been previously used to access web pages having particular characteristics,

selecting the highest bid for placement of an advertisement on a particular web page which has particular characteristics and which has been accessed by a browser which previously has accessed particular web sites.

14. The system recited in claim 1 wherein each view-op has an associated viewer and said server includes a data base of information concerning viewers.

15. The system recited in claim 1 wherein said server includes a data base with information about web sites.

16. A computerized method for supplying and pricing electronic advertisements, comprising:

a. Storing client profile information in a computer database;

b. Providing the client profile information to advertisers;

c. Receiving electronic bids from said advertisers for specific advertisements to be presented to clients with matching client profile information;

d. Selecting the highest bid among the electronic bids received within a specified time period;

e. Transmitting the selected electronic advertisement to the matching clients;

f. Calculating the delivery fee for the selected advertisement; and

g. Generating and transmitting an advertising bill to the corresponding advertiser.

17. A computerized method for supplying and pricing electronic advertisements, comprising:

a. Storing client profile information in a computer database;

b. Providing the client profile information to advertisers;

c. Receiving electronic bids from said advertisers for specific advertisements to be presented to clients with matching client profile information;

d. Selecting the highest bid among the electronic bids received within a specified time period; and

e. Transmitting the selected electronic advertisement to the matching client.

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